



INSIGHT INTO YOUR TELECOM AND BROADBAND ASSOCIATION

## Legislative Session Winding Down

The short session of the Oregon Legislature is beginning to wrap up business as this is being written. While there weren't many pieces of legislation for the OTA to track and monitor, there was one important bill we were fortunate enough to be invited to work on.

**Senate Bill 1566** gives counties the authority to begin charging for permits for work in the right of way along county-maintained roads. While this might not sound like the kind of legislation OTA should remain neutral on, the exemptions and other considerations gained were worth the effort. It is also worth noting that all the utilities were very clearly told that some kind of legislation was going to pass and were strongly encouraged to participate.

Briefly, here are the exemptions for which counties are *not allowed* to assess permit fees:

- Vegetation management or vegetation clearance maintenance, and the vegetation management or vegetation clearance maintenance is required by the Public Utility Commission
- Routine replacement or maintenance of a line, fixture or other facility, including but not limited to pole replacement
- Replacement or maintenance of a line, fixture or other facility required by the commission under ORS 757.035 or 757.039 or by a national electric safety code
- If the permit is for relocation of a line, fixture or other facility, and the relocation is required by the county
- If the permit is for emergency or urgent work, regardless of the duration of time of the work, to restore or maintain services, and the emergency or urgent work is necessary to protect public health or safety.

The OTA and utilities worked to limit as much as possible the circumstances that would require any fee payment. In addition, we were able to secure a couple more things in the bill:

- Counties have 15 business days to issue or deny the permit once a complete application is received
- The fee assessed cannot exceed \$500.00 (there is a CPI increase per year)
- This entire legislation will sunset and be repealed on January 2, 2031 (it will take effect as soon as it is signed into law)

There was also **House Bill 4040** that the OTA supported. Briefly, this bill amends the current law to eliminate the broadband application grant review committee in the Oregon Broadband Office (OBO). Instead, the Oregon Broadband Advisory Council (OBAC) will serve as the grant review committee. The OBO and Representative Pam Marsh both supported this change.

As usual, special thanks to our Legislative Committee and those who came to Salem for the annual Cooperative luncheon or otherwise took time to discuss issues. It takes a team effort to ensure our interests are being looked after in the Capitol.

*-Brant Wolf*



## HAPPENINGS >>>

Scholarship Foundation Announcement & Event Recap

### It's That Time Again! 2024-2025 Scholarship Application Now Available!

We can finally announce that the updated application for the 2024-2025 Scholarship cycle is now available online! There were a few changes, but nothing too substantial.

You can view the memo and application [here](#) on our website. Please remember to forward this on to potential award candidates and stress the importance of following the directions and requirements listed to avoid disqualification. I, for one, cannot wait to see them come in and to be able to pass them off to the Scholarship Foundation Board of Directors for review and scoring! Due to the delayed posting, the Board has made the deadline Monday, April 15 by 5:00 p.m.

Have any questions or need assistance during the process? Email Mandy [here](#) or reach out to any of the Foundation Board members.

*OTA Scholarship Foundation  
Board of Directors*

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### 2023 CO-IT Seminar

In November, the Central Office & IT Committee held its annual two day seminar in Newport at the Best Western Agate Beach Inn. Topics for sessions included XGS-PON presented by Russ Dueck from Adtran, 6G for Fixed Wireless and WiFi, Network Security Best Practices, FTTP & Subscriber Experience presented by Glenn Taylor from Calix, Rack Mount Batteries and Maintenance, End User & Email Security, Cybersecurity in the Regulatory World discussed with RJ Del Mese from Moss Adams and a state level regulatory update given by Brant Wolf.

The OTA would like to recognize our event sponsors who help keep registration costs down for our attendees!

*A Very Special Thank You to Our  
2023 CO-IT Seminar Sponsors!*



UPCOMING EVENTS  
**SAVE  
THE  
DATES**

### Spring 2024 OTA Outside Plant Seminar

**Tuesday & Wednesday**

**April 16 & 17 (Plan for Monday arrival!)**

Best Western Plus

Hood River Inn

**Registration and Lodging are Open!**

REGISTER NOW

### 2024 OTA Annual Conference

**Monday & Tuesday**

**June 3 & 4 (Plan for Sunday arrival!)**

Salishan Coastal Lodge

Gleneden Beach, OR

**Look for Registration Details in April!**

DON'T FORGET!

### MESSAGES & GOVERNANCE >>>

*A Personal Note, Staff and Board of Directors*

### Thank You for Your Patience!

Yo-ho! We are 90% through the transition process of bringing our accounting service back "in-house." Due to a 1/1/24 switch in software, a big learning curve and stacking projects, many things have been pushed back or delayed since the beginning of the year ... namely dues renewal, the directory, the Scholarship application and getting committee meetings consistent. I hope the year begins to normalize in the next few months and I am able to get back on track. I really appreciate your patience and understanding as we work through all the challenges around this big change for our little organization!

*-Mandy*

### OTA Staff

Brant Wolf | Executive Vice-President

[bwolf@ota-telecom.org](mailto:bwolf@ota-telecom.org)

Mandy Jundt | Office Manager & Member Services Coordinator

[mjundt@ota-telecom.org](mailto:mjundt@ota-telecom.org)

### OTA Board of Directors

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Stay tuned for  
information on  
our new identity!